



Clark County Board of Commissioners' Office

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November 1, 2002

Thank you for your comments regarding the potential for a tribal casino at the La Center Junction.

Like many residents of Clark County, we are very concerned about the possibility of development that could have costly and unprecedented impacts for the county. We have been in contact with federal officials, representatives of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, and county legal counsel to address those concerns.

As a result, we are focusing on efforts to evaluate the impact of *any* significant industrial, commercial, or residential development that might be allowable, *under federal law*, if land is held in trust for the benefit of the tribe. We also will ensure that the Tribe and federal Bureau of Indian Affairs are aware of those impacts, to prevent economic hardship and problems involving public services and facilities within our community.

Our approach to this unique situation will emphasize county interests central to the increasingly complex social and financial circumstances surrounding our geographic location. These include: safe communities; economic stability; and mutual respect.

At this time, there is substantial uncertainty about what type of development the tribe may decide to pursue as a means of producing income to meet tribal needs. We will consequently instruct county representatives to work very diligently to find the most effective means of averting excessive impacts or financing essential improvements to address issues already apparent or that may arise. Clearly, this will require discussions about public safety, traffic, and environmental concerns.

As always, we appreciate hearing from you and plan to share additional information as this process unfolds.

Sincerely,


Judie Stanton, Chair


Craig A. Pridemore, Commissioner


Betty Sue Morris, Commissioner

BOCC/mk

c: John Barnett, Chair of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe